



CALPEEK

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P.O. BOX 1468, BEVERLY HILLS, CA 90213 (310)659-0205 FAX(310)657-4340
Dick Rosengarten, Publisher E-Mail calpeek@aol.com

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CALIF. REPUBLICAN PARTY ELECTS SHAWN STEEL AS CHAIR, BUT "TEAM BUSH" TO PLAY KEY ROLE.

Editor's note: Having been pounded by the Demos in the past 3 Calif. election cycles, those key GOPers who watch what goes on inside the Calif. Republican Party(CRP) are now hoping that a new page has been turned with the election of Shawn Steel as the CRP's new chair – and with the appointment of two of George W. Bush's key Calif. operatives to party posts. Here's our update & analysis...

...It was probably one of the closest elections for CRP chair in many a year. Steel defeated former Assemblymember Brooks Firestone by a margin of just 86 votes: Steel 662 vs. Firestone 576. For Calpeek readers who have been following this story, Firestone was the challenger supported by moderates and mainstream conservatives, while Steel was supported by conservatives, with a some help from mainstream GOPers. Since the CRP has been under the control of the conservatives for the past decade, a win by Firestone would have been an upset. Steel's operation was under the direction of Jim Camp and Sacto-based campaign consultant Wayne Johnson...

...Firestone, who raised and spent \$100,000 (from some 300 contributors) to win the chairmanship, had been hammering at Steel, saying the CRP's message was wrong and trying to link him to the immediate past CRP chair, John McGraw, one of the party's most controversial and conservative chairs in recent time. The linkage attack didn't stick, mostly because Steel said he would put winning in front of ideology. Also many think Steel's plan to reorganize the party (along the lines of the rival Calif. Demo Party, with a professionalized staff) was the way to go, especially given the chaos over the past year...

...Immediately following his win, Steel held out his hand in unity (unlike McGraw) and named Firestone to be co-chair of a CRP Restructuring Committee. Gerald Parsky, Pres. Bush's Calif. state chair in 2000, will head the CRP's Budget & Expenditure Cmt.; and Silicon Valley business exec Thomas F. Stephenson (Sequoia Capital) will be the CRP's finance chair. The appointment of Stephenson, a big GWB

fundraiser, is seen by GOP political operatives as being a major and important step on the road back. And while the restructuring is taking place, savvy RNC operative John Peschong will serve as CRP executive director until a search team can select a permanent ED. Peschong served as CRP ED under former CRP chair Tirso del Junco, so he knows the drill. Bottomline: the "grown ups" are now in charge of the Calif. Republican Party...

...Are the differences between the moderates and the conservatives past history? No. That will take a long time to resolve. But the moderates did make some inroads at this past CRP gathering. Three members of the Firestone slate won CRP positions: Trice Harvey, former assemblyman from Kern Co., is the new Regional vice chair – Central; Gloria Hom is the new 1st asst. secretary; and Huntington Park councilwoman Rosaria Marin is the new 2nd asst. secretary...

...Other key CRP officers were all from the Steel slate. They include: Bill Back as CRP vice chair; Shannon Reeves (he's the NAACP Oakland chpt. president) as CPR secretary; Doug Boyd as treasurer; Jalene Andrews as CRP regional vice chair north; and Lois Godfrey as CRP regional vice chair south. Godfrey is the past president of the big Calif. Federation of Republican Women. Barbara Stedham of Somona is the CRP's president of the County Chairmen Association. Stay tuned...

CAMPAIGN 2002: BATTLE FOR CALIF. GOVERNOR IS UNDERWAY. DAVIS VS. JONES, SIMON AND ARNOLD.

Editor's note: It sure didn't take long for Gov. Gray Davis' chief political operative, savvy consultant Garry South, to get fired up for *Campaign 2002*. The primary is a year away and South is on the warpath against two potential GOP challengers. Here's our update & analysis...

...There were a few shots fired at Davis during last week-end's Calif. Republican Party state convention, such as the bumper sticker Blackouts in 2001/Gray Out in 2002. But two of the three names now being mentioned as possible GOP gubernatorial rivals didn't even attend the CRP gather-

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ing. Only CA Sec. of State Bill Jones was there. Jones is still up in the air about challenging Davis in 2002, but says he'll reach a decision in about 30 days...

...The two no-shows were actor Arnold Schwarzenegger and businessman William Simon Jr. Simon has hired GOP campaign consultant Sal Russo to help him explore the Calif. waters, while Arnold S. (it's easier this way, trust me) isn't that far along, but has expressed some interest in running Statewide in 2002...

...But since about Feb. 16th, South has been on the attack, hitting both Simon and Arnold S. with numerous faxfacts – from the Gov. Gray Davis Committee. No attacks thus far on Jones. The first hit was on Simon, son of the late and former U.S. Treasury Secretary. This attack was a story about Western Federal S&L, which was seized by federal regulators back in 1993...

...And then on Feb. 19th it was Arnold S.'s turn. Political reporters got a faxed copy of an article appearing in the March 2001 edition of Premiere magazine titled, "Arnold the Barbarian." South has faxed a few more hits on Arnold S. and the movie star's attorney, Martin D. Singer, isn't amused. According to a current South memo, Singer says the Premiere article is false & defamatory – and so were South's faxfacts. Calpeek read the article by John Connolly and indeed it wasn't very flattering. And neither was the National Enquirer story about Arnold S. It all goes to prove one thing: *politics is show business for ugly people*...

...And while some may regard the South fax-attacks on Arnold S. as somewhat amusing, the more solid hits are aimed at Simon Jr. There's the toxic real estate memo (1996); as well as the Simon – A Secret Brownie? memo. That's about a \$2,000 contribution Simon Jr. gave to Kathleen Brown back in 1994 when she was running for governor against Pete Wilson. Team Simon responds saying Bill Jr. "knows and likes Kathleen" and that's why he gave her a donation...

...Russo hasn't been sitting still while South takes off the gloves. In a rather detailed 17-page document, Russo fires back at Davis with "The Corruption of Power – A Report on Loretta Lynch, president Calif. PUC." The subtitle is "How the Political Ambitions of Gov. Gray Davis Led Him to Select a Democratic Campaign Warrior and Whitewater-Tainted Clinton aide with No Energy Experience to Serve as the President of the PUC." Haven't read it all yet, but it's on Calpeek's must-read list. Stay tuned...

CAMPAIGN 2001: UPDATE ON L.A. MAYOR'S RACE.

Editor's note: The week of Feb. 26th started off very slow in the L.A. Mayor's race, but by week's end things were back up to full speed. This week Calpeek focuses on Antonio Villaraigosa's campaign. Here's our analysis & commentary...

...The week beginning Feb. 12th should have been an outstanding 7 day period for former Demo Assembly Speaker Villaraigosa, but it *wasn't*. On Feb. 12th he won the L.A. Co. Federation of Labor's COPE endorsement and on Feb. 13th he kicked butt on L.A. City Atty. Jim Hahn to win the backing of the L.A. Co. Demo Central Committee. The two endorsements fit nicely into a strategy of positioning Villaraigosa as the liberal candidate of the Big 6 who are running in the April 10th mayoral primary...

...Despite these victories, some of the positives were offset by the negatives of Villaraigosa's involvement in the Carlos Vignali Jr. pardon brouhaha, which erupted at almost the same time (2/11) and continues to get play in the L.A. Times and local tv news. Villaraigosa, to be sure, has lots of company in this Vignali fiasco, including mayoral rival, U.S. Rep. Xavier Becerra (D-L.A.). And the jury is still out on whether the Vignali mess will hurt Villaraigosa or Becerra...

...But some of the other mayoral candidates are asking if a more seasoned politician would have written a letter asking for a commutation of sentence without first checking the facts of the Vignali case? The answer is **no**. Villaraigosa's rivals say it comes down to this: 6 years in the Assembly is **not** enough to prepare a candidate to become mayor of CA's largest city. Need an example? Just look at Richard Riordan over the past 8 years. His record is *mixed at best* and most attribute this to his total lack of elective experience...

...But Villaraigosa's biggest problem right now is trying to break into the top tier – still owned at the moment by L.A. Councilman Joel Wachs and Hahn, with Controller Kathleen Connell and Villaraigosa tied in the 2nd tier. Sources say there's some new polling which suggests slight upward movement for Steve Soboroff (he's been on tv) and this has caused the race to tighten up. The L.A. Times poll is due out very soon...

...And while Villaraigosa cmp. consultant Parke Skelton is nibbling away at Hahn's 20 year record (Hahn appears to be Villaraigosa's key target), the fact is Hahn is now on tv with two ads (total buy about \$500,000 over 2 weeks) reinforcing 50 years where the Hahn name has been associated with Demo Party politics and organized labor. Villaraigosa isn't

close to Hahn or Wachs in name ID and at this point doesn't have the \$\$ to counter Hahn's current tv campaign. Hahn has about \$1 million more in his warchest than Villaraigosa. Perhaps because the spending limit has ended (because Steve Soboroff breached the \$2.2 million limit), Villaraigosa has a chance to play catch up, but that's iffy because the others have the same opportunity...

...FYI: a worry spot for Villaraigosa: Hahn's allies in organized labor have kicked off a campaign called *Working Families for Hahn*. It a coalition of unions (mostly Building Trades + AFSCME District Council 36 and L.A. City's big SEIU 347). And while this represents only about 1/3 of the total L.A. Co. Federation of Labor's membership, Local 347 has 70,000 members just in L.A. City alone. Stay tuned...

24th SD SPECIAL UPDATE: GALLEGOS VS. ROMERO.

Editor's note: Here's a final update on this Mar. 6th special election to replace Hilda Solis(D), who was elected to the U.S. House in November...

...It's coming down to the wire and both former Assemblyman Martin Gallegos and current Assemblywoman Gloria Romero are pulling out all the stops. The winner of this Demo slugging match will be in a May 1st runoff with GOP candidate Vince House. But since the 24th SD is a heavy Demo district, the Demo primary winner will be going to Sacto as the new State Senator...

...Going into the final few days, insiders are divided as to whom will ultimately win this special. Some think Romero has an edge, while others say it's just too close. Romero's own polling shows her up by 10 points, but that data is now 6 weeks old. Both sides are optimistic about their chances...

...And as most insiders know, in a special like this turnout is a key. The 24th SD is not a big turnout district, so sources think a showing of 21-24% would be good. Might not even be that high, despite the fact there are a number of small cities inside the 24th SD which hold their muni election on the same day. Problem is that there will be two(2) ballots: one for the 24th SD and another for the local election. And if one wants to vote via absentee ballot in both races, the voter has to request two different ballots. Confused? So are voters...

...Some sources think voters have not really been all that focused on this special until very recently. But now that the mail is beginning to land, interest is picking up. And the hit mail is kind of interesting. The Gallegos team is furious with Romero because on or about the day that Gov. Gray Davis phoned Romero to tell her he planned to endorse Gallegos, the Romero team put out a mailer with Davis' photo promin-

ently displayed. It's the old implied endorsement thing. But it also included a hit against Gallegos. It's done all the time, but the fact is Davis is for Gallegos...

...Key difference between the two campaigns: Gallegos is putting more effort into a field/ground GOTV effort vs. phone banks and mail for Romero. Stay tuned...

CALPEEK'S CALENDAR OF POLITICAL EVENTS

Mar. 6	60 municipal elections, mostly L.A. County; 24 th SD Special election primary.
Mar. 9-13	Nat'l League of Cities Congressional Cities Conference, Washington DC.
Mar. 30-Apr. 1	CA Democratic Party convention @ Anaheim Convention Center.
Mar. 30-Apr. 1	Calif. Republican Assembly annual convention, Renaissance Los Angeles Hotel.
Apr. 3	Glendale & Inglewood city elections; 65 th AD Special runoff election.

32nd CD UPDATE: 19 FILE FOR DIXON'S HOUSE SEAT.

Editor's note: 19 candidates have filed to run for the late Julian Dixon's 32nd CD seat. Filing closed Feb. 26th. No shocks on the Demo side, but there are some familiar names running from other parties. Here's a brief analysis...

...Of the 19, the top tier of Demos consists of former State Sen. Diane E. Watson; State Sen. Kevin Murray and L.A. Councilman Nate Holden. These are the candidates with the best name ID and who are expected to slug it out for the Demo nomination. The winner of the April 10th Demo primary will have battle GOP, Green and Reform party candidates in the June 5th runoff...

...Other Demos include attorney and radio talk show host Leo Terrell; Kirsten Albrecht; Frank Evans III; former Cranston aide Tad Daley; Wanda James; Philip Lowe; Diane Reifschneider; Jules Bagneris and Blair Taylor...

...The GOP candidates include Michael Cyrus, Mike Schaefer and – get this – Noel Irwin Hentschel. Irwin-Hentschel is the deep pocketed GOPer who ran unsuccessfully for Lt. Governor in 1998. Although she and her husband live in Bel Air, she was raised in the Crenshaw and Culver City areas and she still has family living in the 32nd CD. Remember: one doesn't have to reside in the district to run, but in Irwin-Hentschel's case, she does have roots in the 32nd CD. She's a successful businesswoman who owns American Tours, Inc., located in the Airport area...

...Another familiar name running is Ezola Foster. She was Pat Buchanan's VP running mate last year on the Reform Party ticket. The Green Party candidate is Donna Warren.

And there are two official write-in candidates...

...FYI: among the top Demo candidates, Murray recently received the L.A. Co. Labor COPE endorsement. And he won the endorsement of U.S. Rep. Henry Waxman(D-L.A.). No word on what the Congressional Black Caucus(CBC) will do, but U.S. Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson of Texas who is the CBC chair has endorsed Watson. Ditto: U.S. Rep. Charles Rangel(D-NY) and CA U.S. Reps. Loretta Sanchez of Orange Co. and Juanita McDonald of Carson. Watson also picked up the endorsement of the NWPC and Women For; the Eucmenical Congress (an umbrella group of Black churches); and the Teamsters Union(Western Region). Local Demos from the 32nd CD are expected to gather Mar. 4th to consider an endorsement. Stay tuned...

CALPEEK'S INFOBAHN: POLITICAL SHORT TAKES.

Editor's note: Here are a few items, political & otherwise, worth noting...

■ ***Disgruntled Demos*** – POed at former Pres. Bill Clinton over the pardon brouhaha? Still in shock over the election of President George W. Bush? Take heart and follow the advise of a Demo Calpeek reader who emailed, "These days my President, his staff and the issues they tackle on are tv Wednesday nights at 9 p.m." That's NBC-TV's *The West Wing* or as conservatives call it, "The Left Wing."...

■ ***GOP Opens Primary Doors*** – Delegates to the CA Republican Party's recent convention voted to permit Decline to State voters to cast ballots in their primary, thus the CRP now has the same rules as the CA Demo Party...

■ ***Energy & Politics Part II*** – Found out where former Calif. PUC Chair Daniel W. Fessler is. He's practicing law in the S.F. Bay area with the firm of LeBeouf, Lamb. For those who forgot, Fessler was the driving force behind Calif.'s energy dereg efforts in the mid-1990s. And it turns out that Fessler may be giving legal advise to one of Gov. Gray Davis top 3 energy advisors: Michael Peevey. Seems that a source ran into Peevey in Sacto and had a short conversation at which time Peevey said he was getting some input from a very knowledgeable attorney who knew all about energy/utility law. Turns out that attorney was none other than Fessler. Very interesting...

■ ***Will Polanco Resign 22nd SD Seat?*** – Ever since he pulled the plug on his 1st District L.A. City Council race, there have been rumors that State Sen. Richard Polanco (D-L.A.) may go even further and resign his State Senate seat before the end of the term. FYI: Polanco's name remains on the April 10th ballot, but the lawmaker said he's trying to get it removed...

■ ***Villaraigosa Vs. Cedillo*** – A long running friendship may be at an end, according to several reliable sources in L.A. and Sacto. The parting of the ways is between State Assemblyman Gil Cedillo(D) and former Assemblyman (and now L.A. mayoral candidate) Antonio Villaraigosa. For a long time, Cedillo has had his eyes on Sen. Richard Polanco's 22nd SD. As Calpeek reported several weeks ago, Villaraigosa's fall back position if he loses the mayor's race, is to run for the 22nd SD – putting him at odds with Cedillo. Cedillo isn't a happy camper and feels Villaraigosa has betrayed him...

CALPEEK'S NEW JOBS AND PERSONNEL NOTICES.

Editor's note: Here are some items to mark down in your notebook...

● Colton's new mayor is Deirdre Bennett. The 5th District councilwoman took over at former Mayor Betty Cook suffered a stroke and resigned...

● Edelman Worldwide PR has promoted Edith Fernandez to Sr. AE in the firm's Sacto office...

● Gov. Davis has appointed Sacto Undersheriff Carol A. Daly, Associate Warden Booker T. Welch Jr. and former Assemblyman Brett Granlund to the Board of Prison Terms (parole board)...

CALPEEK'S MARKETPLACE NETWORK

● **Associate Director/Hispanic Affairs** to manage California Catholic Conference's public policy advocacy efforts. Focus: Hispanic legislators, staff, community leaders. Legislative advocacy experience, college degree, practicing Catholic, bi-lingual Spanish/English. Send letter/resume to CCC, 1119 "K" St., 2nd Floor, Sacramento, CA 95814. EOE.

● **Assistant to the President** for labor organization. Responsibilities include: scheduling and travel planning for president; composing correspondence; meeting planning; research and responding to member inquiries. Political/legislative experience a plus. Fax cover letter, resume and salary history to: (916)921-1106.

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